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T H E

MASSACHUSETTS

## Missionary Magazine.

### BIOGRAPHY.

#### COTTON MATHER, D. D.

THE life of this respectable man was published by his son, Samuel Mather, an abridgement of which has been given to the world by the late learned Dr. Jennings, with a commendatory preface by Dr. Watts. This would be a very considerable encomium, if it stood alone: but he had higher claims of regard, both as an indefatigable pastor and a fervent Christian. He was born at Boston, in New England, February 12th, 1663. His father, Dr. Increase Mather, and his grandfather, Mr. Richard Mather, were both eminent ministers of the gospel in New England. By his mother's side he was grandson to Mr. John Cotton, a man of piety and learning; after whom he was named Cotton. His progress in human literature was great and speedy; but it was a much brighter part of his character, that, like another young Timothy, he knew the holy scriptures from a child. He grew in wisdom and knowledge above most of equal years, as appears by his early hatred of sin, and the solemn transactions of his soul with God. He made remarks upon all authors in the course of his reading, by which means he was naturally led to study them thoroughly, and to fix what he had so studied upon his memory, which appears to have been strong and retentive.

His method was excellent in the education of his children; but he laboured most to instruct them in religion: and it was his usual way, to pray for each of them separately and by name. He laid down special rules for his own government in conversation, which he strictly adhered to. He was so careful to redeem his time, that, to prevent the tediousness of visits, he wrote over his study door in capital letters, "Be short." In his account of

one year, it appeared that he had preached seventy-two public sermons, besides many private ones ; that not a day had passed without some contrivance to do good, and in which some part of his income had not been dealt out to charitable and pious uses ; that, in that one year, he had composed and published fourteen books, and had kept sixty fasts, and twenty-two vigils. And yet, notwithstanding his amazing diligence in improving his time, his diary abounds with censures upon himself. For instance, at the end of one year he writes, "Time so mispent, as to render it unfit to be called life." Another year he calls, "A year of forfeited life." On the review of another year he says, "Another year of my sinning against my precious Redeemer. Alas ! my unfruitfulness !" Another year he calls, "A year whiled away in sin and sloth."

He began to preach when he was about eighteen, and was chosen co-pastor with his father before he was quite twenty years old. This will appear to have been early, and perhaps too early. Certainly it can be no rule for those who are not furnished with his uncommon attainments. It should be remembered, that, at this time, he was not only a master in the *Latin, Greek and Hebrew* languages, but had gone through a course of other difficult and various learning. In his nineteenth year he proceeded master of arts, and chose for his thesis, "The Divine Authority of the *Hebrew Points*," which he took upon him to defend, though afterwards, we are told, upon mature reflection, he saw sufficient reason to change his opinion upon that matter. It appears by some passages in his diary, wrote about that time, how apprehensive he was of danger from temptations to pride ; particularly by the following : "The apprehension of cursed pride (the sin of young ministers) working in my heart, filled me with inexpressible bitterness and confusion before the Lord. In my early youth, when some others of my age were playing in the street, I was preaching to large assemblies ; and I was honoured with great respect among the people of God. I feared (and thanks be to God that he made me fear) lest Satan was hereby preparing a snare and a pit for such a novice. I therefore resolved that I would set apart a day to humble myself before God for the pride of my own heart, and to supplicate his grace to deliver me from that sin. And I saw reason to fear that I had been guilty of it more especially in these two respects : first, by applauding myself in my own thoughts ; as when I had either prayed or preached with enlargement, or answered a question readily and suitably : and, secondly, by an ambitious affectation of pre-eminence above what could reasonably belong to my age or worth. I endeavoured therefore to humble myself with the following considerations :" Here followed several considerations in his diary upon the folly and sinfulness of pride,

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for his own self-mortification. He had rules for his conduct in the exercise of his ministry, such as these : “ To exercise himself unto godliness : To endeavour to suffer injuries and abuses, and bury them in silence, rather than maintain a contest with any man : To endeavour to maintain a high opinion of the personal worth of the more valuable persons in his flock, and of the unspeakable worth of the souls of all of them : To pray for direction in the choice of his text and subject : To consider the cases and circumstances of his hearers, as means of direction to the subjects he should preach on : To have much of Christ in his sermons : To keep a list of all the members of his church, and to go over it by parcels at a time in his secret prayers : To visit the families of his flock for their edification, and to propose some edifying questions to the younger branches of them from time to time. “ What (says he in one passage) have I been doing since I came into the world, about the great errand on which God sent me into it ? And if God should now call me out of the world, what would become of me throughout eternal ages ? Have I ever yet by faith carried a perishing soul to the Lord Jesus for righteousness and salvation ? ”

In the first year of his ministry he had reason to believe he was made the instrument of converting at least thirty souls. It was constantly one of his first thoughts in a morning, “ What good may I do to-day ? ” He resolved this general question into many particulars. His question for the Lord’s-day morning constantly was, “ What shall I do as a pastor of a church, for the good of the flock under my charge ? ” His question for Monday morning was, “ What shall I do for the good of my own family ? ” in which he considered himself as a husband, a father, and a master. For Tuesday morning, “ What good shall I do for my relations abroad ? ” Sometimes he changed his Tuesday morning meditation for another, namely, “ What good shall I do to my enemies ? and how shall I overcome evil with good ? ” For it was his laudable ambition to be able to say, “ He did not know of any person in the world, who had done him any ill office, but he had done him a good one for it.” His question for Wednesday morning was, “ What shall I do for the churches of the Lord, and the more general interests of religion in the world ? ” His question for Thursday morning was, “ What good may I do in the several societies to which I am related ? ” The question for Friday morning was, “ What special subjects of affliction, and objects of compassion, may I take under my particular care ? And what shall I do for them ? ” And his Saturday morning question, relating more immediately to himself, was, “ What more have I to do for the interest of God in my own heart and life ? ” He was an illustrious imitator of his glorious Pattern ; and the whole aim and labour of

his

his life was to do good. His application, and the labours he went through, are almost incredible. He wrote and published three hundred and eighty-two books, reckoning essays and single sermons; and several of the books are of considerable size. He had the honour of an epistolary correspondence with several persons of eminent character for piety and learning in other countries; as the late lord chancellor King, the late reverend and celebrated Dr. Frank, professor of divinity in the university of Hall in Saxony, and many others.

[*To be continued.*]

## THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD ILLUSTRATED.

### No. I.

**T**HE existence of God lies at the foundation of morality and religion. And though this great and interesting doctrine is considered as visionary by modern philosophists, yet it is capable of being supported by the most plenary evidence, both from the light of nature and the volume of revelation. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. The invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.” Hence they may justly be styled fools, and said to be without excuse, who deny the divine existence. Nor is the existence of one supreme, independent being capable of more clear and irresistible proof, than that he is possessed of all possible perfections. It is not my *immediate* object, however, in the subsequent essay, to produce the evidence in favour of the divine existence, and the infinity of his perfections; but to illustrate his *immutability*; and to make such practical remarks upon it as shall naturally arise.

The immutability of God will not be denied by those who admit his *self-existence*. And that he is self-existent we think may be made to appear.

It is a self-evident proposition, that no being can exist but in one of these three ways; he must either originate from nothing, absolutely without cause; or be produced by some external cause; or be self-existent. But that something should be produced by nothing, is inadmissible; for this implies that a thing existed before it did exist; which is too contradictory to be received as truth. And that it was produced by an external cause cannot be true of every thing; unless we maintain that a succession of causes and effects has existed from eternity; but this

this sentiment is too replete with absurdity to be adopted : “ for every series supposes some *first*; and to suppose *that first* to be derived is self-contradictory. And should a circle of causes be supposed, instead of solving, it will, if possible, increase, the absurdity ; since this would suppose every cause in the circle to have produced itself, and all the other causes likewise.” However far we drive back the idea of a succession of causes and effects, we shall not be able to prove, that every thing was produced by an external derived cause ; for the last cause we can mention, in the greatest possible series of this nature, was as dependent, for its existence, on something preceding it, as any other effect, which can be named in the whole succession, was on its immediate cause.

Hence we are led to conclude, upon rational principles, that, since *something* now exists, *something* must have existed from eternity, absolutely underived, and in the most exalted and glorious sense independent ; and therefore it must have been self-existent. And to be self-existent, is to exist by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing itself. And if there be an absolute necessity of the existence of a certain thing or being, it must exist eternally ; otherwise it is only a consequential or relative necessity. An absolute necessity of existing, and being eternal, are so nearly connected, that they prove each other. For if a thing exist by an absolute necessity in its own nature, a contradiction is involved in the supposition of its not existing ; hence it must have been eternal. And if it was eternal, and depended on no extraneous cause for its existence, it must exist by an absolute necessity in its own nature ; and since it exists by an absolute necessity in its own nature, independently of any extraneous cause, to assist or affect it, it must continue eternally to exist ; for a contradiction is implied in its not existing. It is as utterly impossible, in the nature of things, that a self-existent being should cease to exist, as that it should commence its own existence. If dissolution take place, it must be effected by some foreign cause ; but we believe it surpasses the power of the most sagacious reasoner to prove, that a being which depended on no foreign cause for its existence, can by any such cause be destroyed. Thus there is a *something* which has existed from eternity, and which will continue eternally to exist, or, in other words, is self-existent. *This something is the being whom we call God.* And, since he is self-existent, he must of course be *immutable*. Immutability is inseparably connected with the idea of self-existence. That which is self-existent is capable neither of increase nor diminution. If one of the primary properties of a self-existent being may suffer the least diminution, by parity of reasoning each may, and each eventually cease to exist, and consequently the being possessing them be annihilated. But we

we have before proved, that a self-existent being cannot be annihilated by any extraneous cause. Nor can we conceive it possible that a being whose existence did not depend on his own volitions should annihilate himself ; consequently his original properties, or attributes, cannot suffer the least diminution. Nor is it less irrational to suppose that a self-existent being should receive the addition of any new properties ; for if any new properties should be added, it will follow that the being to whom the addition is made was not in his present form eternal, and consequently not self-existent. Hence a self-existent being can suffer no diminution, nor receive any increase, of properties, nor undergo the least alteration ; consequently he is immutable. Whatever perfections he possessed from eternity, he will continue to possess to eternity, without the least accession or change.

Here it may not be improper just to mention some of the leading perfections of the Divine Character. Of these, some are called *natural*, and some *moral*. His natural perfections are omnipresence, omniscience, and almighty power. His moral perfections are comprised in holiness. That God possesses these perfections, the last excepted, it is thought by some may be conclusively inferred from the doctrine of his self-existence. But we shall not pursue this inference at present, since all, who admit the Divine Existence, must allow that he possesses the perfections above mentioned. And, if he possess them now, he possessed them from eternity, and will continue through eternity to possess them, without the least alteration ; for a self-existent being can suffer no diminution, nor receive any addition. That God is immutable, in the sense above stated, is abundantly evident from the following declarations of his word : "I am the Lord ; I change not :—Thy years are throughout all generations :—Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of thy hands : they shall perish, but thou shalt endure ; yea, all of them shall wax old as doth a garment ; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed : but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end :—With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning :—The same, yesterday, to-day, and forever :—He is of one mind, and who can turn him ?—The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent ; for he is not a man, that he should repent." These passages of sacred truth establish the preceding sentiment, viz. that God is immutable. He is the same from eternity to eternity—unchangeable in his being and perfections—unchangeable in his perceptions and determinations. "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it ? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ?" HORATIO.

[To be continued.]

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## AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

*From the Biblical Magazine.*

A GENTLEMAN in London, being in an ill state of health, was advised to walk out daily into the country. In one of his excursions, about five miles from town, he saw a small cottage at a little distance, and being weary, made up to it that he might rest himself. On entering the house, he found a poor woman, with four children, who were chiefly employed in spinning wick-yarn for candles. During his stay, the following conversation took place :—Good woman, (said he) your house I observe is sadly out of repair: I wonder how you do in the winter season? Surely you must be very uncomfortable. “ It is but a poor place indeed, sir; (said the woman) but it is a mercy that it is no worse. It is better than we deserve; and we are under the care of the same kind Providence in the winter, as in the summer.” Surprised at this unexpected reply, he wished to find out her religious principles. To what parish (said he) does your house belong? She told him. And how far do you live from the village? “ Three miles, sir.” That is a long way for you to go to church: and I suppose you go to church on a Sunday? “ I hope, sir, we make conscience of worshipping God, on a Sunday, and on other days.” I hope you do: but do you not go to your parish church? “ No, sir; we do not.” Not go to church! What do you do then; and where do you go? “ We go to meeting, sir.” Go to meeting! Why, were you brought up to go to the meeting? “ No, sir.” How came it about then that you should forsake the church, to go to meeting? “ I will tell you, sir.—About four years ago I was visited with a heavy and dangerous affliction; and being apprehensive that if I died I should perish forever, I became very unhappy. I had such a sense of sin, and such apprehensions of the wrath of God, that I was a terror to myself, and those about me. As my affliction increased, and the danger became more apparent, I was increasingly wretched; conceiving myself to be approaching the brink of hell. I cried to the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul, though I could scarcely entertain any hope of obtaining it. It was however my last resort, and all that I could do. I told my husband and neighbours of my distress; but they could not understand my case. I was to them an object of wonder and pity. They tried to sooth and comfort me, by saying, ‘ You are a very honest and industrious woman, a quiet and peaceable neighbour, a good wife, and a good mother; God also is very merciful, and you are a penitent: if, notwithstanding all this, you should go to hell, wo be to thousands.’

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But, alas ! all that they could say was of no use. I found they could not understand the state of my mind.

" Meanwhile my fever increased, and I was thought to be on the point of death. Several of my poor neighbours were about me, expecting every breath to be the last. ' She is just going,' said one of them. I could not speak, but was perfectly sensible, and heard those words ; at which I thought, if I were going, I was going to hell. It pleased God, however, to spare me : and I hope it was in mercy. From this time the fever abated, and I gradually recovered. But my distress of mind did not abate. I considered that though, through the mercy of God, I was spared a little while, yet I was still the same wretched, vile and guilty creature : I needed mercy, but almost despaired of obtaining it. I used, at this time, to watch my heart, and pray in my poor manner ; but could find no relief. Such was my unhappiness, that I had no heart to attend to the common concerns of my family. I again told my poor neighbours the state of my mind ; but they knew not what to say, more than they had said ; and I could not be easy. They then wished me to go to the minister of the parish.

" Soon after this, I felt inclined to take my neighbours' advice. I went to the clergyman, and told him the exercises of my mind from the beginning. He appeared to be much surprised, and said he supposed I must have been guilty of some great wickedness ; and asked me what it was. I told him that I did not understand him. Why, said he, you must have committed theft, or drunkenness, or fraud, or infidelity to your husband, or some other great sin. No, sir, said I : I desire to be thankful to God, I have been kept from all these outward evils : but you do not understand my meaning, sir : I am a vile sinner *in the sight of God* ; my heart is full of evil. Every thing I do is sinful : I am a ruined and undone creature : I fear that I am going to hell—and the thoughts of these things are terrible beyond what I can express. ' Oh, poor woman, (replied he) you must not give way to such thoughts as these : you will go out of your mind : you must endeavour to drive away such melancholy ideas. I would advise you to get into some cheerful company ; and, if you can read, get some diverting books ; and by degrees you will get the better of these gloomy apprehensions. You must strive against them, or you will not be able to perform the duties of your family.'

" Oh sir, (said I) I cannot think your advice is right. Surely this would be adding sin to sin : it would be acting contrary to my conscience, and therefore would increase the weight of my distress, instead of removing it. ' Well then, (said he) I would have you come to church, and take the sacrament, and make your peace with God. If, with this, you be honest and industrious,

trious, live in peace and charity with your neighbours, and do your duty, God is merciful, and you need not distress yourself, or fear but you will be happy.' I thanked him for his last advice, and thought I would follow it. Accordingly I went to church, for more than a quarter of a year, and took the sacrament; but found no relief. The preaching was no way suitable to my case. I wanted something to relieve my mind, but knew not what would do it.

"One sabbath-day my husband and I, after having been at church on the forenoon, and there being no service in the afternoon, were sitting by a ditch side, eating our bread and cheese. Having heard that there was a meeting, at which a Mr. Tibwell preached, about two miles farther, I felt a strong desire to go that afternoon and hear him. On expressing it to my husband, he made many objections. 'That (said he) will be the way to be ruined indeed. You know that my master is a great enemy to the presbyterians, and he would turn me off from his service. Our landlord also greatly dislikes them, and he would turn us and our children out of doors. Besides, you know that my lady gives her dole at Christmas—she is now very kind to us; and we have more of her charity than some of our neighbours: but she is very strict to the church; and if she come to hear that we go to meeting, we have nothing more to expect from her.' Alas! said I, all this is nothing to me. I am so distressed about my soul, that other things are of no account. If you will not go with me, I will go by myself.—I immediately rose up, and set forward; and when my husband saw me determined on going, he went with me. But when we arrived at the place, he refused to go in, that he might have to say, if called in question, that he was not in the place. I however went in: and soon after, the congregation being assembled, the minister came. My eyes followed him—After singing, he prayed—But, oh, how was I affected in his prayer! He was large in the confession of sin, particularly of heart sins; and very earnest in his petitions for mercy to poor sinners, pleading the merits and mediation of Christ as the only ground of hope. He prayed out my very soul. Never did I feel before as I did then. My expectations were raised to a very high pitch. When he took his text I was all attention. It was the former part of the parable of the sower. He began by describing those hearers that are compared to the way side. The ground was hard, and did not receive the seed; and partly through ignorance, inattention, and the influence of Satan on the mind, no good was produced. Next he spoke of the stony-ground hearers. On these, he observed, some effect was produced: but it was of short duration, and at last came to nothing. Then he came to speak of worldly-minded hearers, who also brought no fruit to perfection.—I followed him all through

his sermon; but it was an awful one to me. I thought it all belonged to me. I therefore went home with my mind more burdened than before. I saw that I was every thing that was vile and abominable; and could not help crying out, *Wo is me, for I am undone!*

" There was however one thought which afforded me some relief. I had till now considered my case as singular; for I had never met with any person who had the same views and feelings with myself. But now I perceived there was a person who understood the state of my mind. I reflected on the prayer and on the sermon; and my mind was filled with thought. Understanding that Mr. Tibwell meant to preach upon the latter part of the parable the next sabbath, I longed for its return all the week, that I might hear it through; hoping, also, that he might be directed to say something which would afford relief to my afflicted soul. Well, the sabbath returned; and a blessed one it was to me! I was again greatly impressed and affected with the prayer; and when the minister described the good ground, he shewed that it was originally all wild and barren, but that it was made good by the influence of divine grace. It was broken up by convictions of sin, which entering deeply into the soul of the sinner, he was brought to see sin exceeding sinful, and to feel the plague of his own heart. Thus the spirit was made tender, and the mind teachable, and prepared for the reception of the gospel. Then he opened up the great truths of salvation through Jesus Christ, and directed the hearers to him, as the only saviour from sin, and the curse of the law to which they were exposed. He shewed that pardon of sin, peace with God, justification and sanctification, all came freely to the chief of sinners, through the atonement and righteousness of Christ; and that these being applied by the Spirit of God, were made effectual to their conversion, and in the issue were productive of good fruit in the present life, and in the life to come everlasting joy.

" Now was my heart filled with comfort—now I was led to see the way of escape—now a foundation was laid for my hope to rest upon—I returned home with joy; and could now attend to my family affairs with cheerfulness. From this time I attended constantly at the same place, and that with great delight: every sabbath was a feast day to me: and I have this additional comfort, that my husband also attends constantly and cheerfully under the gospel with me; and I trust that he also is converted to Christ. He now prays in his family; and we never lived so happily as we do now.

" Thus, sir, (added the poor woman) I have given you some account of the reasons why we left the church, and go to the meeting. I hope we have both got good by it, and that there

is no harm in that, sir." No, replied the gentleman; I assure you that your story is not a little interesting to me, and I hope you will persevere in your attendance on the gospel. "Yes, sir, (said she) I hope we shall; for surely I can say from experience, that "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Well, good woman, can you read? "Yes, sir, I can now read better than I could before." And what good books have you got? "I have but one, sir; and that is the Testament." Let me look at it, if you please. "Dear sir, I am ashamed to shew it to you; it is such a tattered piece: for before I knew the worth of it, I let my children play with it; but now I take it to meeting with me; and when the minister mentions a text that is in it, I turn to it, and read it. [Giving the book into his hand, she added,] *There is all John in it, sir: and there is sweet reading in John!*" Yes, good woman, there is sweet reading in John; and I am glad that you have tasted the sweetness of it.—And can your children read? "Yes, sir, my two eldest girls can read pretty well: for I send them once or twice a day to a neighbour, who is a better scholar than I, and she teaches them."

After making the poor woman a present, to enable her to buy a new Bible and Testament for the children, the gentleman took his leave of them.

## LETTERS ON SOLITARY DEVOTION,

From PASCAL TO JULIA.

### LETTER I.

MY DEAR JULIA,

I MOST sincerely congratulate you upon the rich experience you have recently had of the distinguishing love of God to your soul. A few months ago you were sunk into perfect stupidity with regard to spiritual objects. Your concern was entirely limited to time. Eternity was forgotten. God was shut out of your heart. The gaieties, the pleasures, the flattering prospects of the world, absorbed all the powers of your understanding, and all your active propensities. You had no relish for religious instruction, or employments of piety. The reproofs and warnings of the divine law, the proffers of mercy and salvation to sinners through the atonement of the cross, and moving lessons in providence, were addressed to you in vain. The most striking descriptions of hell, and the most affecting representations of heaven, had no other effect upon you, but to augment your disgust to religion, and harden your heart against every challenge of duty.

duty. Sovereign grace has at length triumphed over your obduracy. Your eyes have been opened to see, and your conscience has been quickened to feel, the enormity of your guilt. God has shewn you that you are a miserable sinner. All your sensibilities have been alive to the conviction, that you are justly under the curse of the divine law, on the brink of hell, and, in yourself, beyond hope. You have been brought deeply to feel your need of being cleansed from your guilt in the blood of the Lamb, and of being sanctified in heart by the special influences of the Holy Spirit. You no longer doubt the reality of religion, or the authenticity of the sacred scriptures. You admit the soul-humbling doctrines they inculcate. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into your heart, to give you the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ. Penitence hath dissolved your heart, and suffused your eyes with tears. You have given up your selfish interest, and are now no longer your own. You have entered into the most solemn covenant engagements, publicly and privately, to be the Lord's. With respect to the sincerity of this self-consecration you think you cannot be deceived. I rely, my dear Julia, that your conclusions are just. I have indeed no other reason to fear that you are deceived, and that I misjudge respecting you, but the general one; that sin is of a delusory and misguiding nature, and that the heart of every one who is not truly sanctified is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. This is a sufficient reason for constant self-examination, self-diffidence, habitual familiarity with the scriptures, watchfulness and prayer. I have no inclination to diminish your joys by groundless suspicions. If your confidence be in Christ, there is no danger of its being too strong. Cheerfully do I allow myself to believe, that your reconciliation to God is real and lasting. How rich is the grace which has been exercised towards you if this be the fact! What reason does it furnish for everlasting gratitude! Thrice happy creature! You know what it is to be embraced in the bosom of electing and redeeming love. You feel the tenderness of the spirit of adoption. Favoured vessel of mercy! now "all things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours." You are no longer a stranger, and an outcast, but "a fellow citizen with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." This lovely, tender Shepherd of Israel is your guide. Heaven is your home; thither are you tending; and henceforth, even through a wasteless eternity, your pleasing task is to be, to shew forth the praises of Him who hath loved you, died for  
you,

you, and brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light. I most joyfully count you among the number of my religious friends. To the friendly interest I have heretofore taken in your welfare, I can now unite the complacency of Christian esteem. And you may depend upon it, that if, in any thing, I can aid your progress in holiness, and contribute to your full preparation for glory, I shall most gladly serve you. Freely unbosom yourself to me. If you wish any explanations of doctrines or duties, send me your requests. If you need any spiritual relief, tell me your burden. My attention to the request of your letter will, I hope, encourage you to multiply your demands. They shall be answered as far as my poor abilities enable me. In your letter you say, that, "in your opinion, no branch of Christian duty can be of greater importance than an habitual secret devotion." I am pleased to observe your solicitude to be faithful in your duty in this respect. You wish me to write to you on this subject, and to indulge as much particularity, and freedom, as my leisure will allow. You wish to understand your duty, to feel its weight, and to be assisted in the due performance of it. Indeed you could not make a request more agreeable, and with which I could be more readily disposed to comply. I will give you my thoughts freely. Your inexperience, your remaining corruptions, and your consequent dangers, call for the aid of some more experienced Christian friend in regard to this portion of your duty. But I cannot exhaust the subject in a few words. If you will allow me to be as diffuse and particular as my concern for your spiritual good, and the pleasure I take in dilating on subjects of this nature, incline me to be, I shall give you a packet of letters before I come to the end. If I seem prolix and tedious, I am sure an apology will be furnished in the docility and benignity of your own mind. This letter you will consider as only an introductory one. Circumstances at this moment oblige me to bid you adieu.

I am, &c.

[*To be continued.*]

### THE RURAL ASSEMBLY.

**O**N a summer's day, under the shady influence of a grove of stately oaks and elms which occupied the contiguous parts of a spacious park and pasture, the following serious talk was held by a promiscuous assembly of Beasts and Birds concerning man :

The sportive birds aloft, while regaling themselves, and adjusting their soft attire, in consequence of frequent interruption by the painful panting of the deer, and the dire groaning of beasts

which

which lay in a weary posture on the ground, desired a conference, to ascertain the cause of so much affliction among the residents of a pleasant shade. Though the beasts were rather surprised at the unexpected proposal of their cheerful and elevated neighbours; it was yet, after proper consultation, readily accepted by every quadruped of the grove.

*The Ox.* We groan, says the antient leader of the herd, because we are tired with hard labour, and must soon be forced by our cruel masters to leave this cool and refreshing retreat. If, like you feathered folks, we could safely reside amid the tops of shady trees, and fly above the reach of man, our sighs and groans would soon be changed into cheerful songs. While you pleasantly soar from tree to tree, and from hill to vale, over the heads of men and beasts, we are chained fast to the plough, and *pushed* and *goaded* along by the most merciless drivers. Six honest days of the week are rarely sufficient for us to be employed in dragging on the most intolerable loads. What think ye of this, pretty birds? Are you willing to change situations? Is there not reason for our deep sighs and groans? Alas! while you are courted by ease, and crowned with delight, we are the subjects of deep affliction and oppression.

*The Bird.* Your lot and ours, it must be granted, are different. But every one is qualified for his place. You are strong, and we are weak: and while we are obliged to rise early, and fly from place to place, to collect our daily food, in sight of armed, concealed foes, you are carefully furnished and amply supplied by your owners. Is not this a balance in your favour?

*The Ox.* Our owners provide for us *straw* and *provender enough*; but with what view, in general, except to accumulate private property, and to increase the most sordid gratification?

*The Bird.* But let us not go too fast: were not you originally formed to subserve the interest of man? was not this the object of your creation?

*The Lamb.* We grant that God made all things for the use of man; but we deny that he made any thing for the abuse of man. As all creatures, man not excepted, were made for the honour of God, we should not complain if used for this divine purpose; but when men forget God, and sacrifice us by thousands at the altar of self-indulgence and shameful luxury, we cannot but call for the vengeance of Heaven to fall on their guilty heads. O how many millions of innocent lambs have been driven to the slaughter to pamper gluttons and debauched characters! Their blood cries aloud for recompence. For the wolves of the wilderness are not half so destructive to us as men. The testimony of lambs which have been greedily devoured by riotous eaters of flesh will soon condemn and confound the guilty world. For God will not suffer such wanton abuses to pass with impunity.

The

*The Deer.* I have with much attention and sympathy heard the talk of my cousin Lamb, and approve it. For who are more exposed to greedy dogs, and wolfish men, than lambs and fawns? Alas! how often are our feeble race chased to death by those ravenous partners! I wish that singing birds would descend from the tops of trees, and reside on the sultry glebe long enough to learn the hostile nature of man.

*The Bird.* We are not ignorant of human nature; and have therefore long been in the habit of attempting to fly above the reach of danger. But why shall deer complain? For you are maintained at great expense, in a spacious and beautiful park, full of trees and every kind of grateful herbage, and have agility to escape the enemy at option.

*The Deer.* Birds do but dream while chattering in this manner. For we are maintained for the purpose of mere sport and luxury: and our speed, within these narrow confines, is our danger. It is but a motive to yelling dogs and cruel sportsmen to pursue us. If we were at liberty, in the extensive range of nature, which was the native heritage of our feeble and timorous race, agility would be our safety. But what can we effect by flight in this little cage? Here we were born, and here we are confined to make sport for dogs and men in fright and death. How hard the lot of poor, defenceless deer! How base the nature of man! Surely, as we are excluded the privilege of roaming the boundless forest, which is our life, we choose death rather than life. For a short death is better than a lingering one. But tell us, happy birds, do you meet no difficulties in your extensive regions? Are men your friends? do they never ensnare and disturb you?

*The Bird.* O yes; they not only ensnare us, but even shoot us flying, when other methods of capture fail. We have no peaceful abode: not, however, because we injure men, but because they love the sport of killing us, and telling the number of the dead. Millions of harmless birds have been destroyed because gunners take pleasure in aiming at living marks. The deprivation of life is often the sportsman's object. But shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? For life is capable of enjoyment, and is the gift of God. How can he escape the displeasure of God, who wantonly takes away the life of any of his creatures? The least insect is a lawful proprietor of the world.

*The Horse.* I have, perhaps, kept silence too long, while this injured assembly have examined the barbarity of man. For neither the beast of Balaam nor any other creature has a more weighty testimony to bring against man than our useful and much abused race of animals. Here I am, a poor, old, lame, decrepid creature. Behold me, ye flying fowls, and ye nimble residents

residents of the park, and all ye members of this afflicted assembly ! See my leanness, and count my sinews and bones, which are as visible as the light of day ! My life is a burden. But not to the harrow and whip do I attribute this miserable plight, but to the hard and unfeeling heart of man. From my youth up I have been his faithful servant. By night and by day, in cold and heat, through thick and thin, have I served my masters in thick succession. But alas ! alas ! for my constant faithfulness I have, except when a prancing colt on parade, been rewarded with shameless cruelty and neglect. Surely if I were man my beast should not have occasion to complain of unkindness ; for I would merit his love and gratitude.

*The Dove.* I am the solitary, mournful bird of the woods. I have during six successive summers been the resident of this shady retreat. Here from year to year I have attempted, with a loving mate, to raise up children to enjoy existence, and fill the grove with grateful cooing. But, with grief be it spoken, no sooner did our harmless young venture from the nest, and begin to leap from limb to limb, than the savage sportsmen terminated their days, and we were left to mourn their untimely fate. While my husband remained, though we mutually tasted the cup of affliction in consequence of the loss of children, yet my grief was comparatively light ; for his love compelled him to take and carry the burden. But now, alas ! he is gone, and our little coal is nearly quenched. For the unfeeling sportsman the other day, not contented with taking a stag from the park, after two hours eager chase, shot my beloved mate, and my all. His loss I mourn, and will faithfully mourn till death. For, destitute of a companion, life itself is a kind of death.

I hope this sympathizing assembly will excuse my plaintive notes and tears. For observing your afflicted posture, and catching a few sentences of your united complaint, I have descended from the elevated branches of the elm, to impart a few words of advice and consolation.

My friends, listen to a poor, solitary dove ; and seasonably suppress every thought of retaliation or depression. For wise and holy ends God has made man the lord of creation : and though he has offended, and though all the animal tribes groan under the burden of his guilt, we must submit. For it is the will of the Creator. This heavy curse will soon be removed. Light will succeed darkness ; good, evil ; and pleasure, pain. For the wrath of man shall praise the Lord, and every object and quality shall answer his benevolent purpose.

Thus to the listening, approving throng spoke the mournful, solitary dove.—Profound silence ensued, till she spread her wings and departed in quest of a mate, cooing her flight.

The other birds and beasts attempted to continue the serious business of the assembly, but were suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the proprietor of the park at the gate, with a new kennel of hounds, to take a stag for supper.

It so happened, that a company of children, who were at the grove for the purpose of being spectators of the chase, not only heard the debates of the assembly, but were deeply impressed by it. To their feeling, tender minds it was the most seasonable and instructive lesson, as appears from their reflections while returning home.

*Henry.* Did you ever know, before, that beasts and birds could talk?

*Richard.* I have heard folks say that they know a great deal: but I never thought they could talk so distinctly and plainly.

*Frank.* I don't see but they talk as well as other folks.

*Nancy.* For my part, I was really astonished to hear the dove and other birds speak so sensibly.

*Clarissa.* Well, children, I am sure we have had a very serious lesson to day. For they spoke the truth in a most reprobating light.

*Leonora.* O, what a dreadful thing it is for the poor creatures to be so shamefully abused! I wish the *world* had been present at the assembly.

*Sophia.* I am determined that our Jack shall never rob any more birds' nests, and take the young ones. For it makes my heart bleed to think of it. Poor little creatures!

*Nancy.* How beautifully the lamb talked, and how justly too!

*Lucy.* I wish the butchers would let lambs alone. For I shall be afraid to see another brought to market.

*Nancy.* Seeing they are made for man, let us use them like Christians, and God will not be angry.

*Sophia.* Though we cannot hinder the butchers from killing the innocent creatures, we can prevent ourselves from eating them in a wicked manner; and we must follow the Bible, and eat, and drink, and do every thing else, to the glory of God.

*Clarissa.* Yes, girls, we certainly, must, or the lambs and birds will witness against us at the great day.

*Harry.* Well, I know I shall tell Cato and Fortune not to load the oxen so heavily again, and never to whip them so cruelly. For, if thus abused, they will complain and tell God; and he will be angry with father and all the rest of us.

*Frank.* Never, never was I so surprised as at the solemn talk in the grove. Don't you think, Richard, that God heard it, who sees poor beasts so much abused, especially by parties of pleasure, on the sabbath?

*Richard.*

*Richard.* Yes, he hears every thing ; and will punish the world for their cruelty towards beasts, if they don't soon repent. God will not suffer his innocent creatures to be injured in this manner. I am almost afraid to move one step. I shall dream all night about the talk in the grove, and the day of judgment.

*Jerry.* I hope somebody will make a hole in the park wall to night, and let all the deer escape. For it is very wicked to keep them there confined to be chased to death by the blood hounds and hunters.

*Frank.* No, Jerry, rather hope that the owner himself will repent, and open the park gate with his own hand, and let them have the world for a park, as God did when he first made them. For the forest is the native place of deer.

*Serena.* Come, children, it is almost sunset ; and we must walk fast on. Let us go home and learn to do well, and treat all God's creatures with kindness. For if we do not he will be angry, and call them to testify against us before his tribunal.

*Fidelia.* I desire to be thankful for this day's instruction. Never, never before did I receive such a serious and profitable lesson. I hope we shall all retain it. Let us now hasten home, and, by assisting each other's memory, repeat every word we have heard at the grove to our parents and little brothers and sisters, and entreat and charge them to be kind to beasts and birds. For Solomon says, "A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast ; but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel."

#### CONCLUSION.

As children and fools speak the truth, let the aged and the wise seasonably improve the interesting tale. For life is short, and eternity is long.

PHILOKTISIS.

#### ON SLOTH.

To the Editors of the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine.  
GENTLEMEN,

BEING sensible of past indulgences, and feeling a little active this morning, I send you a few thoughts on *Sloth*.

**H**OW many hours are needlessly spent by some on their beds ! by others, in the most idle and frivolous conversation ! by others, in reading merely to gratify the fancy ! by others, in unprofitable amusements, which tend to kill time, rather than to qualify them for future employments ! To what temptations are such exposed during those idle hours ! What corrupt images play before the fancy ! What a habit of self-indulgence gains strength !

Sloth

Sloth is the thief of precious time ; the origin of poverty, the source of vice ; an enemy to the happiness of individuals, the felicity of families, the prosperity of the community ; it fears the conscience, hardens the heart, is a great sin against the great God, and the vortex of temporal and eternal destruction.

Should we not, then, be aware of our constant temptations from this quarter, and be ever on our guard against them ? We feel that this body is our tempter, and we must not allow its desires to bear a sovereign sway. Our meat and drink must be moderate. We must beware of sumptuous and luxurious fare. We must abstain from those needless recreations which an idle world has invented and multiplied. We must beware of vacant thought, vacant time, vacant conversation, vacant company. We must beware of trifling employments, which take the appearance of industry, while they are mere contrivances by which we disguise from ourselves the indulgence of our sloth. If we read, it must not be with careless inattention, nor must we prefer books of amusement to those which will add to our stock of useful knowledge, and improve the heart. Let us, then, adopt a maxim of an active promoter of the best interest of his fellow men—the salvation of the Greeks and Barbarians—“ Be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

#### ON THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

**I**T is not strange that those who form their opinion of death by its visible effects, should entertain doubts whether the soul survives the body. Death certainly destroys all appearance of perception and sensibility, and seems to put a final period to the existence of the soul. Accordingly we find the Heathens have generally either denied or doubted the existence of the soul after the dissolution of the body. Cicero discusses this subject with great ingenuity, and considers every thing of importance, which the most celebrated philosophers had said upon both sides of the question ; but after all, declines giving his own decisive opinion upon the point, though he expresses a strong desire to exist after death. And since this wise and learned Heathen could not satisfy himself, that he should retain his intellectual powers after the dissolution of the body, it must be presumed, that no man can demonstrate, by the bare light of nature, the existence and sensibility of the soul in a separate state. But though we can easily account for the ignorance of Pagans, concerning the nature and consequences of death, yet we cannot so easily account for the ignorance and errors of Christians upon this subject. It seems strange, that those who enjoy the gospel, which

which has brought life and immortality to light, should entertain very different and contradictory opinions concerning the existence and state of the soul after its separation from the body. Some suppose that the soul is material, and that death, which dissolves the body, necessarily destroys the soul. Some suppose that the soul is spiritual and survives the body, but is totally devoid of activity and sensibility in its separate state. And some suppose that death only dissolves the connexion between the soul and body, and that, while the body lies mouldering in the grave, the soul continues to live in a state of unspeakable happiness or misery.

In order to investigate the truth, in the midst of this variety of opinions, it may be proper to proceed gradually, and observe, 1st. That the soul is distinct from the body. The body is material, but the soul is spiritual ; and we know there is a wide and essential distinction between matter and spirit. Their properties, so far as we can distinguish them, are totally diverse. The essential properties of matter are extension, solidity and gravitation ; but the essential properties of spirit are perception, understanding and volition. The body has all the properties of matter, and none of the properties of spirit. The soul has all the properties of spirit, and none of the properties of matter. The body, which is solid, heavy and extended, cannot perceive, nor reason, nor choose, nor refuse. The soul, which has the powers of perceiving, reasoning and choosing, is totally destitute of the properties of solidity, extension and gravitation. The soul and body, therefore, are absolutely distinct, and essentially different substances. There is no way to avoid this conclusion, but by supposing, that matter may be so modified as to produce perception, understanding and volition. And this is, indeed, supposed by some christian divines and philosophers, in defiance to reason and common sense. If any portion of matter can be made to produce thought, it must be done by some peculiar modification of its particles, and not by altering its nature, and making it spirit. But can we conceive, that any modification of matter should render it capable of thinking and reasoning ? Though the Deity can do many things, which are beyond our comprehension, yet he cannot do any thing which implies a real contradiction. And it seems to imply a plain contradiction that he should form a rational mind out of irrational matter. For, there is no particular size, nor shape, nor motion, nor arrangement, of the particles of matter, which can have the least tendency to produce the power of thinking. Hence there is no more reason to suppose; that it is in the power of God to modify matter into mind, than to cause a thing to exist, and not to exist, at the same time. And, if this be true, there is an essential distinction between the soul and body, arising from the nature of things.

things. It is certain, however, the scripture keeps up a plain distinction between the soul and the body. When our Lord appeared to the eleven disciples, after his resurrection, "they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit." But he soon convinced them of their mistake, by appealing to the essential difference between corporeal and spiritual properties: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Handle me and see: *for a spirit hath not flesh and bones*, as ye see me have." Paul says, "I knew a man in Christ, about fourteen years ago (whether *in* the body, I cannot tell; or whether *out of* the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third heaven." Here the different nature, and the separate existence, of the soul and body, are plainly suggested and necessarily implied. The apostle James supposes the same distinction, when he says, "The body *without* the spirit is dead." And if we now turn to the account of the first formation of man, we shall find the foundation of the essential distinction between the soul and body, which runs through the whole Bible. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." According to this representation, the body of Adam was completely formed and organized, before his soul or spirit was united to it; which affords the highest evidence, that the human body is no more essential to the human soul, than the human soul is essential to the human body. This leads us to observe,

2d. That the soul must exist after its separation from the body. The body is in its own nature mortal, but the soul is in its own nature immortal. The body is composed of corruptible materials, which naturally tend to corruption; but the soul is composed of incorruptible materials, which no secondary causes can dissolve or destroy. Hence the soul must necessarily survive the death of the body, unless the Deity please to annihilate it, which there is not the least ground to suppose. But the express declaration of scripture affords us the best evidence of the existence of the soul after death. We read in the third chapter of Exodus, that God said to Moses, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." This text Christ cites to prove the separate existence of the soul, as well as the resurrection of the body. This appears from the turn he gives to the passage, in the twentieth of Luke: "Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living*." That the soul exists after its separation from the body, is plainly implied in the account of Elijah's raising the widow's son, which we find in the seventeenth chapter of the first of Kings. "And Elijah cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord

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my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah ; and the soul of the child came into him again." Solomon represents the soul as leaving the body at death, and still existing in a separate state. " Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." From these and similar passages in the Old Testament, the Jews in general were led to believe, that the souls of men exist after death. This appears from the answer which the disciples gave to Christ on a certain occasion. He demanded, " Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am ?" They replied, " Some say that thou art John the Baptist ; some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." The Jews could not have formed this opinion of Christ, unless they had believed in the separate existence of the departed spirits of Elijah and Jeremiah, and other ancient prophets. The parable of Dives and Lazarus is built upon the doctrine of the separate existence of the soul after it leaves the body. And though we may suppose that many circumstances mentioned in that parable are not to be considered as literally true ; yet we can hardly suppose that Christ would give such a lively description of the happiness and misery of the dead, if their souls did not only exist, but exist in a state of perfect sensibility. And this sentiment he once expressed in the most plain and explicit manner. " Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." This mode of expression decides the point, that the dissolution of the body does not destroy the existence of the soul. And the same thing is implied in his gracious declaration to the penitent thief on the cross : " This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." When the disciples made choice of Matthias as an apostle in the room of Judas, they plainly intimated in their address to God, on the occasion, that they supposed the soul of Judas was in a state of misery and despair. " They prayed and said, " Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." And it was in full view and belief of the existence of departed spirits in heaven, that Stephen prayed, with his dying breath, to be admitted to the mansions of the blessed. " And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Thus it appears that the souls of the dead do certainly exist after their separation from the body.

[To be continued.]

## REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND.

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THE following most agreeable accounts have been received by the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home.\* The first letter is from one of the Society's Missionaries, who has been in their employment these last two years. The other is from one, some time ago in their employment, but now pastor of a Church, who, at their request, went upon the short itenerancy of which he gives an account.

June 10, 1802.

MY DEAR SIR,

I EMBRACE this opportunity to inform you, that since my last, especially since I sent you my journal, there is here a great shaking among the dry bones; many, both old and young, are awakened: even children from seven to thirteen years of age can give a distinct account of their experience of the nature and evil of sin, and their deliverance from it by faith in the blessed Redeemer, through the merits of his death and sufferings. Their love to the word of life, their hatred at sin, and the spirit of prayer and praise that appears to be among them, is truly pleasant and comfortable: may the Lord grant that they may be kept alive, and that the spirit of grace and love may enlighten their minds more and more, and strengthen and comfort their hearts to hold on their way rejoicing. The manner in which many of them were impressed, was to me at first surprising; they were suddenly struck during the time of prayer; they fell to the ground, and many of them, both old and young, continued speechless for twenty minutes, or half an hour, and the first language they uttered was, 'Praise the Lord! O praise and magnify his ever-blessed name, for his great love wherewith he loved us, and gave himself for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God,' &c.

It began first in the prayer meetings which I mentioned in the journal. For some time back, they were obliged to keep open meetings, as the people round them thirsted so much for instruction. As false reports were formerly carried about, they were at first unwilling to admit them; but as they found them so desirous they could not shut them out. The awakening began first in the meeting at \_\_\_\_\_. One or two of those who were formerly great enemies to the truth, were impressed the first night. This gave them such encouragement, that they assembled again the next night, when no less than fourteen were impressed, one after another falling to the ground, so that they continued praying and praising the whole night. From this place, it spread to \_\_\_\_\_, and to \_\_\_\_\_, a space of about nine miles,

\* In Scotland.

miles, well inhabited. They all flocked together in each of these places, and continued to go from house to house, praying and praising God for eight or ten days and nights, with only about two hours sleep each morning, and many of them were several nights without any sleep, busily employed conversing and comforting those who were impressed. The greater part of this work happened during the time that I was at ——, and before I returned, the many false reports I heard from the enemies alarmed me much, lest they should deceive themselves with false and delusive notions, and of course become enthusiasts. I was told that those who were impressed said, that they saw the Saviour writing their names in the Book of Life, others that they intend to go to heaven alive, &c. But, blessed forever be the name of our Lord, who graciously preserved my dear friends from indulging any such gross and delusive notions. On my return I laboured among them, both in public and private, from house to house, for three weeks, almost day and night, and found them all happy and joyful. Even those, who through weakness were confined to bed, were quite comfortable in their belief of the truth, and joy in the Saviour. Their universal utter abhorrence of sin, and all appearance of the evil ways in which they formerly walked, their fervent love to the Saviour, and to each other in the Lord, was truly pleasant and profitable unto me. I spake to several young men, who were formerly doing their utmost to shew their enmity against the gospel, and who abhorred a sight of me before, or any, even of their blood relations, who were the friends of the truth, now rejoicing in the Lord, and acknowledging with the deepest humility the powerful effects of the Saviour's grace upon their hearts, in turning them from darkness to light, and from the bondage of sin and Satan, to the freedom and liberty of the children of God. They were at first so full of zeal, that they thought if they would declare the truth and the manifestation of the grace of God to their own souls, the most obstinate and wicked part of their ungodly friends and neighbours could not but believe and give over persecution; but they found by experience, that no less than a day of the Lord's almighty power and free grace could persuade any sinner to forsake his evil ways. From this attempt, though not profitable to others, they however reaped profit to themselves, by observing that their first zeal was much mixed with self-dependence, self-praise, and spiritual pride, and on this account, they are deeply humbled indeed. There are a few of them who can give very little account of their experience, or of the truth taking an effectual hold of their hearts; they can only say that the scriptural expressions of some of the friends, in the time of prayer, had such an effect upon them, that they fell to the ground speechless; yet they could understand

stand and hear all the time that they were faintish, and during this time their minds were so full of thought, that when they began to speak, they uttered words as if they beheld objects with the eyes of the mind ; and as they unguardedly uttered these words, the enemies who were present represented the matter in a different light, and said, that they saw these objects with the eyes of the body, &c. and by this means have done much hurt. However, I pray that the Lord may overrule it for good ; it has at present prevented many from coming to hear the word, lest they be smitten with a disease that will put them from meat and work. Some are doing their utmost, both in public and private, to dissuade the people from countenancing these meetings, and openly say it is all from the devil, and compare these men going about, to Judas Iscariot, saying that they have gifts but no grace. Others in neighbouring districts say, that they are thankful to God that their people are not alarmed and distract ed in the same way, but that they hope they will be wisely contented with such knowledge and wisdom as their fathers had before them.

*July 27th, 1802.*

MY DEAR SIR,

—THE following are a few observations which may give you a faint idea of the work of God in —. I preached as oft as possible, seeing my time was short. I had always above sixty, and never a hundred, hearing me. From this you will see that not near so many attend as did formerly, for Mr. F. and Mr. M'K. told me, they have had two hundred and three hundred at some of the places on week days. This may be accounted for, by considering the mighty opposition that is raised against the gospel by the clergy, and by those of the people who have not experienced any thing of the truth on their hearts. I never saw these declarations of our Lord more verified than there, “that his children should be hated of all men for his sake, and that, if they were of the world, it would love its own ; but because he had chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hated them.” They think it strange, that they run not with them into the same excess of riot, speaking evil of them. They have the effrontery to say the most scandalous things of them ; but the servant need not expect to be above his Lord. Among those who attended, I saw nothing but composure, attention, and an earnest desire to hear the words of eternal life. I think I never had more liberty in declaring my Master's will. Their earnestness to hear, and a sense of their comparative ignorance as to many things contained in the word of God, had such an effect on my mind, that I laid aside every kind of formality, and led their minds to those things which appeared to

me most necessary for them to be instructed in. I saw many who give the most decided proofs that they have been converted, and are become like little children ; like Mary, they are always found sitting at the feet of Jesus, receiving the law from his mouth. I was truly happy to find so little wild-fire among them ; I mean enthusiasm, especially among those who paid little or no attention to religion formerly. I always find, that people who have got notions into their heads which they have drawn either from the writings or speeches of men, are much more obstinate than those who have the very first principles to learn. The number of those who appear to have felt the power of the gospel, is great indeed ; even allowing many should fall away, there is every reason to believe, that the Lord has a goodly number who will walk with him in white. Many seem to be in the place of the breaking forth of children ; in a word, it is evident from every circumstance attending the work, that the Lord hath done it. Some were locked fast in the chains of prejudices, and would not listen to the words of life, until the Lord fixed his arrows in their consciences ; and even then they endeavoured to extract them by those means which, alas ! give ease to too many. But being fixed by Jehovah, none but he could pull them out ; and they could get no ease, until by faith they looked to Jesus. With regard to others, the fallow ground was gradually broken up, and the work of the Lord went on without any noise ; while, in many instances, the effects of the operations of the Spirit were immediate and instantaneous, old and young being so affected, that in an instant they would have cried out some on account of sin, while others saw so much of the love of Jesus, that at once they began to sing his praise. It would delight your heart to hear some of the little ones speaking of the love of Jesus to their poor souls. Out of the mouths of babes the Lord has, in truth, perfected praise.

The success of the gospel at —— cannot but raise the hearts of God's people in every place where the joyful news is heard ; and I trust it will encourage you and the Society still to persevere in the glorious work of spreading the favour of the Redeemer's name far and wide. Mr. F. has been highly favoured of the Lord ; and for his attention and perseverance merits the esteem of the Society. In reflecting on the small number who attend the preaching of the word, by what used to do, I thought I saw the wisdom of God visible in it ; for if every thing were to go on as we could wish, our wicked hearts would get proud : so ready are we to be led away with appearances. We may rest satisfied, that the Lord's chosen will be brought in in due time. He is of one mind, and who can turn him ?

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## THE EXCELLENCE OF RELIGION.

*To the Editors of the Massachusetts Missionary Magazine.*

GENTLEMEN,

IF you think the following worthy a place in your Magazine, it is at your service. Yours, &c. C.

**N**O T more excellent is religion in theory, than in its effects. Marvellous are the effects of religion on those who embrace it. Look around you, my friends; are you not personally acquainted with many, who, from the time they *truly* embraced religion, have been better neighbours, better husbands, better citizens, in short, better and more agreeable and useful in every respect? Can the same, with equal propriety, be said of philosophy, deism, &c.?

I know it is often said that Christians are selfish, austere, melancholy, and the like. Many hard things are repeatedly spoken of them. But by whom are they spoken? Not by those who are, in any measure, friendly to religion, but the reverse; and whose lives are such as strongly prejudice their minds against religion, and lead them to the adoption of conformable sentiments, to the rejection of the pure doctrines of our holy religion. For, whatever may be the motives which unbelievers assign for rejecting religion, their daily lives prove that it is the purity of its doctrines which, more than any thing else, offends them.

That many failings are discoverable, even in true Christians, is true; but this is not their religion, but the want of it, for none are perfect in this life. But should any dare to assert that it is in philosophic families we are to look for models of filial respect, conjugal love, sincerity in friendship, or fidelity among domestics, would not their own conscience, their own experience, suppress the falsehood, even before their lips could utter it? The true Christian, instead of being melancholy and dejected, as many imagine he is, keeps up a perpetual cheerfulness of temper, and enjoys, every moment, the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The time never lies heavy upon him; it is impossible for him to be alone. His thoughts and passions are most busied at such hours as those of other men are the most inactive: he no sooner steps out of the world, but his heart burns with devotion, swells with hope, and triumphs in the consciousness of that Presence which every where surrounds him; or, on the contrary, pours out its fears, its sorrows, its apprehensions, to the Great Supporter of his existence. The Christian's desires are innocent, and all his life is serene, while "there is no peace, faith my God, to the wicked." Whatever those who have no religion

gion may say, or think, of Christians, none but such will ever speak lightly of them. Christians only can be called happy. "Delight is not seemly for a fool." Above all things, therefore, let us adhere to morals and religion, with immoveable firmness. Whatever effect outward show and accomplishments may have in recommending a man to others, none but the *truly pious* is really happy in himself. Surely there is no truly wise man, who, in times of affliction, does not seek succour in the Christian religion, which has brought life and immortality to light. And if there be any who doubt our faith, let them think of what importance religion is to calamity, and forbear to weaken its force. For there are no principles, but those of religion, that may be relied on in cases of real distress; and if our opponents cannot substitute something that is equally capable of alleviating the miseries to which our frail lives are subject, let them not take away this solace of our afflictions.

Let others boast of the pleasure of being called Philosophers, Deists, Sceptics, &c. be mine that of the sincere, devout, humble follower of the meek and lowly Jesus. Let me live and die in sweet fellowship and communion with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. For blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. I wish to live to die, and I wish to die to live forever and ever.

### A LETTER TO AN AFFLICTED FRIEND.

DEAR MADAM,

WITH you I mourn, and with you I rejoice. I mourn because you are the subject of deep affliction, and rejoice because afflictions are calculated to make us wise, and also because I find, by your letter, that you already reap the precious fruits of complicated adversity. The loss of your most worthy and affectionate husband, who excelled not only in domestic but public spheres of action, to a person of your sensibility, must be inexpressibly great; and who can describe the depth of sorrow occasioned by the departure of your son Leonard, so soon after the decease of his father! The best of husbands and parents and public characters, and the most promising of sons, removed within twelve days of each other! Surely you have a right to expect the tears of real condolence; for your cup of sorrow is great, and full of the most afflictive ingredients. To remind you who gave the signal blessings, and has seasonably recalled them, is needless. The thought is suppressed by your resigned remarks and reflections. O how beautiful and advantageous to concur with the benevolent design of our Heavenly Father in his chastising dispensations! The patience of Job, and the end of the Lord, his improved and favoured children cannot forget.

forget. We covet your lovely state of mind. For to be able to say, with answerable modesty, "When I am weak then am I strong," is more valuable than thousands of silver and gold. While then we survey the general and abounding prosperity of men, let us bless God that we have so much reason, according to the course of Providence, to expect the rise and progress of religion in the tabernacles of adversity. For, alas! but few of the children of constant prosperity are the subjects of grace. While the sovereign grace of God passes by the splendid domes of the great and affluent, it frequently visits and resides in the low and obscure cottages of poverty and affliction. For, as the glory of the world is but gilded folly and distraction, God wisely and mercifully treats it with neglect. By making the weeping willows of Babylon more profitable to the church than the vines of Judea and the glory of Jerusalem, God has stained the pride and prosperity of man, and furnished the most consoling consideration to all the subjects of Christian resignation. It fills my heart with the best consolation, to find that you realize great profit in consequence of your great loss. Loss and gain operate well in connexion. For, like that celebrated saint, you are acquainted with God by sweet and happy experience, rather than by general report. Having then collected and enjoyed some of the precious fruits of the furnace of affliction, where God has owned you, it is but rational to hope and expect that you will do Christ much honour by correspondent humility, gratitude and obedience. More will now be demanded of you, Madam, than ever; for your advantages to honour Christ, and do good to souls, by the most lively example, are greatly increased. While we see the most endearing connexions and enjoyments of life removed, let us, O let us also see you rise superior to all fading, perishable objects, and ripen fast for eternal glory. While contemplating that boundless duration which opens beyond the grave, it appears a matter of small moment, if prepared for the event, whether the husband be released before the wife, or she before him. For to all the friends of Christ this world is a prison; and happy, thrice happy, those who are first delivered from it.

You affectionately ask, while attending to my family and personal circumstances, whether we are filling up the measure of Christ's sufferings which are behind. I have only time to reply, that the past season has furnished some heavy strokes of affliction to the house. But, blessed be God, he has also, we trust, furnished several of us with the grace of endurance. My dear partner says, with apparent humility, gratitude and confidence, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." Pray for us, that we may hate sin and love holiness. Excuse brevity, and let me subscribe,

Yours, affectionately, L. M.

LETTER

## LETTER FROM DR. BELLAMY TO —

DEAR SIR,

**L**O V E is the sum of all virtue; love to beings in general, to God the Great Being, and to all other beings in due proportion; those only excepted who stand excommunicated by the Great Judge of all, as enemies, irreclaimable enemies, to God, and to all good. Our neighbours, although our personal enemies, are to be loved as ourselves, for they are our flesh and blood, as good by nature as we, and as capable and desirous of happiness as we. Their faults we are never to speak of, unless in duty we are called to it; though they belie us, we are to return good for evil, blessing for cursing.

## ANECDOTE OF A NEGRO SERVANT.

**A**BOUT three or four years since, a respectable gentleman, with the remains of his family, consisting of two young sons and Peter, a negro servant, embarked at the East-Indies for London. A considerable part of their passage was completed with expedition and pleasure, when they came in sight of the ship Commodore, anchored a few leagues on the east. Here the ship, bound for London, found a safe anchorage, and the gentleman passenger, having commanded his servant, Peter, to be faithfully attentive to his sons, entered a boat and directed his course to the Commodore, where certain affairs demanded his attention and presence.

Immediately after his departure, the heavens gathered blackness, and they were threatened suddenly to be overwhelmed in their affrighted and desponding vessel, which was already sinking. In this extremity, the captain presaged the certain destruction of the ship, and gave command that the boat be let down, and all the shipmen committed themselves to her protection immediately. But, alas, while all is motion, he observes the boat cannot sustain them all; he therefore exclaimed, *Some of you, the remains of the gentleman's family, must perish in the ocean; and do you, Peter, instantly, come into the boat yourself, and let the lads perish, or commit them to the boat, and perish yourself.* Peter, with all promptitude and calmness, committed them to the boat, and, for his last words, said, *Telly my master, Peter done his duty.*

*Query.* Is the conduct of Peter justifiable? If it be, on what principles?

RELIGIOUS

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

*Letter from Mr. WILLISTON, Missionary, to Mr. CRAM, Missionary,  
written at CANAAN, Wayne County, Pennsylvania.*

*Lord's-day evening, December 5th, 1802.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

BEFORE I go to bed, I feel disposed to spend a moment with you. I have been to Fishing Creek, and I am glad I went. I have been no where, since I came from home, where things look more promising. It really seems as if we might hope to see an awakening if we would follow up what we have been enabled to begin. The last evening I was among them, I was at Mr. White's at a conference. Mr. Woodward was present. We had a good meeting. We were enabled to bring out some of the leading truths of Christianity, and they seemed all attention. Mr. Woodward spent one sabbath at Mr. M<sup>c</sup> Henry's, and many were at meeting, and things appeared well. I spent a night with Mr. Stoker, the German; I think he talks like a new-born babe. I hope God did not send you to that settlement in vain. They spoke well of you. They said you explained every thing, and made it very plain. Perhaps you are the man to evangelize the Germans. I spent the sabbath before this at Huntington. Monday evening we had a conference as we proposed; but as we found, so we left them. They have chosen their delusion. God has, apparently, given them up to believe a lie.

If it does not rain, I expect to go on tomorrow as far as Lacawac, where brother Woodward is to-day. I do not expect to go any further. I have thought about your proposal of going with you to the Delaware. I have prayed some about it. On the whole, I rather think it is my duty to return to the Susquehannah, and spend several weeks there; and I have not time to spend upon both rivers. After you have made full proof of your ministry in that quarter, I hope you will steer your course to the westward. Do not return to N. E. before your time. Be not discouraged. Perhaps this time the Lord may have a harvest for you to reap and gather into his barn. I wish you would go to Owego Creek, and come to Lisle. We agreed, when we were at Mr. Higgin's installation, to have a general meeting of the ministers and delegates from the churches in the Military Tract; to meet at the Skeneautlus lake, in Marcellus, on the 2d Tuesday of February. If you can make it convenient, I wish you would be there. We talk of trying to form some connection between the churches. I hope you will have grace to direct your way, and render you very useful to the souls of men. Do pray for me, that I may be kept, by the

the power of grace, in a praying and preaching frame. I hope since we parted I have been enabled to think of you repeatedly at the throne of grace. But how easy am I to wander and leave God, so that I can neither pray for myself nor others! If it were not for these wanderings, I think I should be much better fit for my work. Perhaps God makes use of even these to humble me. I blush before God to think how earthly, sensual and devilish I am, and he knows it. I hope you will keep yourself more in the love of God, by keeping yourself more from idols. Write me a line by Maj. Woodbridge. It is likely Mr. Woodward will tarry here the next sabbath; in that way I can get it. Good night.

Your brother and fellow labourer,

SETH WILLISTON.

By much persuasion the Editors have prevailed with Mr. Cram to permit the insertion of this letter. He was reluctant, because it was written to him without any thought of its publication. We think it will honour Christ, and not dishonour the author.

*Extract from a Letter, written in a Frontier Town, to a Missionary.*

DEAR SIR,

SINCE I saw you we have passed thro' various scenes of Divine Providence; but the prospects appear darker with respect to the church. The *general practice* is inquired after, rather than the mind and will of the Head of the Church.

We have great reason to be thankful to several Missionary Societies, for their benevolent exertions in sending Missionaries among us. But it appears to me that there is need of much care to be exercised to send out men who are decidedly, and distinguishingly, on the gospel plan in their preaching and practice. For we, in this country, are, as it were, in a new world. And if we should be taught right, it might have a happy effect upon us and our children.

But why are we troubled, and why do thoughts arise in our hearts? The Lord reigns, and, on the great scale, all is right. But, O for distinguishing preaching! Sir, pray for us.

The Lord bless and strengthen you to do his will; working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.

Yours affectionately,

E. HOPKINS.

State

*State of Religion in the Provinces of NEW BRUNSWICK and NOVASCOTIA.*

St. Stephen, Sept. 18, 1802.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

A GREEABLE to promise, I here give you a short account of the state of Religion in the two Provinces of New Brunswick and Novascotia.

PROVINCE OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

I have preached in this country since the year '85. In that year an awakening took place among sinners at St. Stephen, on the side of the Schoodiack where I now reside. This work has continued with an increase from year to year till now. We have about seventy communicants at present. There is a Church of England minister in every county in this Province.

I think it was in the year '91 we had an extensive awakening, from the city St. John to Fredrickton—distance 95 miles. Here we keep in general two itinerant ministers. We have about two hundred members, or better.

There is a small remainder of a congregational church at Sheffield, 60 miles up the river, of which Nathan Smith and others are members. The Newlights are considerably numerous on the river.

Cumberland is a large place. We had some awakening there also. They keep an itinerant minister among them. The Newlights are numerous there also.

PROVINCE OF NOVASCOTIA.

This Province is also supplied with Church of England ministers, chiefly, in every county. The Right Rev. Charles Inglis is Bishop over the two Provinces.

The Methodists are numerous in this province. We have had several great awakenings in many places, these twenty years past, and some yearly. The Presbyterians have a minister and a congregation at Halifax, at Cornwallis, and I believe at Shelburne, Portfroeway. The Scotch Seceders have three ministers and congregations about Pickton, Gulf of St. Lawrence: at least they were there a year or two ago. The Newlights are numerous in this province. They are of late chiefly become Baptists.

Much might be said respecting the particular manner of the work; but as entering on that subject would lead me to enlarge my scale, I have avoided touching on it. Notwithstanding, the hand of God was clearly and powerfully manifested. O, may signs and wonders be wrought, till all the nations and king-

doms of the earth become the kingdoms of the Lord; which is the prayer of your unworthy friend, and humble servant,

DUNCAN M'COLL.

Rev. DAVID AVERY, Missionary from }  
the Massachusetts Missionary Society. }

N. B. Mr. M'COLL was a Sergeant in the 74th Regiment, in the British Army, in the late Revolutionary War in America; and when the peace was concluded, his Regiment was disbanded, and settled, in huts, on the west shore of the Schoodic, where they now are.

*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman of distinction and piety, dated near Philadelphia, June 14th, 1803, to one of the Editors of the Magazine.*

" **I**T gives me great pleasure to assure you, that the success of the gospel increases all around us. In the western parts of Newjersey the prospect is glorious. Seventy have been added to one church in a short time. Indeed the good news, from every quarter, of the prevalence of the gospel, rejoices the heart of every true disciple of the crucified Saviour."

*Extracts from the Journal of a Missionary in the East Indies.*

" **O**UR journey, thirty miles, was truly pleasant. Preached in the towns and villages through which we passed. Could not forbear weeping to see the poor heathens listen with such earnest attention to the sound of salvation. O that the Holy Spirit may prepare their hearts to receive the truth in the love of it.

" Lord's day, was delighted to see near two hundred come to our house to worship. We talked to them some time, and sung, "*Who besides can recover!*" A young man, who had heard the gospel a few times, brought a hymn which he had composed. Being asked whether he made the hymn himself, he replied, Yes; what God hath taught me, that I have prepared. In the evening the congregation was still larger. We read, expounded, &c. more than two hours. Afterward many tarried for conversation.

" One of the natives accompanied us in our travels, who appears to pay great attention to the word of God. The salvation of Christ appears to be a very delightful subject to him. He tells almost every one he meets what he knows of Jesus, though he is reproached for so doing. We gave him Matthew's gospel, translated into the language of the natives, which he reads with great attention. " The

"The Lord has a few names even in Bengal. O for an increase to thousands, and millions! Surely the Lord will not long delay. Men reproach us, and blaspheme *him*, as if we were fools, and he unable to convert those poor, deluded pagans. But they know not the power of sovereign grace. India, as well as Ethiopia, shall stretch forth her hands unto God!"

In another letter he thus writes:—"This is the time in which the natives torment themselves, and display their zeal for their religious superstitions. A number of them stopped at our gate this morning. While we were looking at them, one put out his tongue, when another thrust a sharp iron through it. Several of them had sword-blades run through their tongues while they were dancing with great violence to their dismal music. Soon after, a man came by with two pieces of bamboo through each of his sides. The drum is yet playing, and more of these poor creatures are passing by, with cords through their sides, while the blood is streaming to the ground! Who will not pray that the Lord Jesus may have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession!"

Not long after, he appears to have a more pleasing prospect.

"Lord's day morning, we went into that part of the town which is inhabited by the deluded natives, and addressed them on the great subject of salvation. Here the people listened to the gospel with great attention, received hymns and Matthew's gospel with much eagerness. Multitudes attended, and we experienced a very pleasant opportunity. So much do the people desire instruction, that, had we more time, or more assistants, much might be done."

"The first Monday in every month we meet at six in the morning to pray for the success of the mission. In the evening we offer our requests, with the thousands of Israel in every part of the world, for the coming of our Lord's kingdom. Every Thursday evening we have a meeting, when we open our minds to each other, to mingle our joys and sorrows, and commit ourselves to the Lord."

*A Conference between Kristno, one of the first converts from Hindooism to Christianity, and a Byraggee.*

KRISTNO was told that an old man and two others wished to hear something about the gospel. They stopped at an adjoining house, and Kristno went to them. Sitting at the door, he asked them, whether they were not come to see Jagannaut, whose worship was then celebrating? Replying in the affirmative, Kristno asked them, What fruit have you found in this worship? They answered, none.

Byraggee. What fruit have you found then, Kristno? Speak.  
Kristno.

*Kristno.* Byraggee, hear ! The good news hear ! Jesus Christ, the great Saviour, was not known in this country hitherto ; but now the news of him is come. He for the sake of his enemies gave his own life. His fruit is this : When a sinner believes in him, he gets the pardon of his sins, and a new mind. Christ is a place of refuge ; there is no other place of refuge in the whole world beside him. (Many other words about our Saviour Kristno said.)

*Byraggee.* This is astonishing love. True, Kristno, this kind of love I never heard before. (Alluding to Christ's dying for his enemies.)

*Kristno.* Byraggee, hear ! We are all the children of God. In what manner ? As I shall now represent it. A rich man had two sons. The younger went to his father for his share of the inheritance ; telling him that he intended to go and live in another place. Receiving his share, he went to another country ; there spending all his riches he became very poor. In that country a great famine happened ; he had no money, no food, nothing at all. At length he became servant to a rich man to feed his swine. He was full of sorrow ; no means to preserve his life : what could he do ? He ate with the swine ! Then he remembered, and said, 'What do I ? I have a father, a very rich father : here I all this affliction get.' His father being in his mind, he resolves to return. 'I will say, Ha ! my father, I am a very wicked son ; I went from you. Now, father, pardon my sins, my wickedness ; give me something, or I perish : I will become thy servant ; thou hast many servants : only give me something to save me from perishing.' Thus thinking and resolving, he set off to his father. His father saw him a great way off. Seeing him, he said, 'Come my son, my lost son !' The father shewed great love, fell on his neck, and kissed him. Hear, Byraggee, in this manner we are the lost sons of God. He is our creator, our father. We have cast away our God ; we know him not ; we are at a great distance from him. Now he is calling us and saying, 'Come, my lost sons, come, return to me, I will not cast you away ; I love you greatly.' In this manner, Byraggee, God is calling to us by Jesus Christ.

*Byraggee.* You have done well, Kristno ; shame, fear, hatred renouncing, you have obtained the riches of Christ. Now having heard of this astonishing love, I will certainly come to you and believe in him.

These three people went afterwards to Kristno's house, and staid there several days. Kristno and all the brethren had much talk with them. The old Byraggee wished to unite Christ and the deptsahs together. Finding he must forsake all for Christ, he seemed much discouraged ; but promised to come again and bring others with him.

OBITUARY.

## OBITUARY.

*An Account of some Religious Exercises of Miss E. A.*

MISS E. A. was a native and inhabitant of Marblehead, where she died about the middle of June, 1802, at the age of thirty-five years. In her early days she displayed a sprightliness of mind bordering upon levity; but a number of adverse providences, some of which were singularly affecting, produced a uniform sobriety in her deportment for several of the last years of her life. When a fatal consumption became in her own view seated upon her, she appeared cheerful, solemn, tranquil and resigned; desirous to converse on the state of her soul, and to receive all possible assistance in preparation for death. About two months before her decease she said she believed she had not yet obtained forgiveness, but that God had done so much for her in awakening her conscience and affecting her heart, she hoped and trusted he would yet make her the subject of saving grace. When distinctions were most clearly made between the moral exercises of the regenerate and unregenerate, her hope of an interest in the mercy of God, instead of being shaken, was manifestly confirmed, so that she soon began, though with great diffidence and humility, to admit the idea of her being already a subject of regeneration. In this she was gradually more and more established to the last. She expressed a firm belief, that she loved Christ and holiness for their own sake, that she desired heaven principally on account of the moral perfection which reigned there, that she hated sin for its own sake, on account of the dishonour which it cast upon God and his Son, and that she never could be reconciled to it, if she knew it could never injure or expose her soul; that she should not feel disposed to blame God, though he should cast her off forever, but should rather justify him in doing it, and could not but rejoice that, if she should be lost, some would be saved; yet, that if God had meant to destroy her, he would not have given her such feelings and desires, surprizing to herself, and far beyond all she had ever before expected to enjoy in this world. Hearing of an aged Christian friend being near death, she sent her dying love to her, and added her hope and expectation, that they should soon meet in heaven, to be forever blessed in singing the praises of redeeming love. In the last stages of her sickness she was subjected to very distressing pains, under which she manifested extraordinary patience. She said she could suffer nothing for Christ, compared with what he had suffered for her, but, if she could honour him by it, she would be willing to suffer ten thousand times as much as she had, and that for months and years. About the middle of May, she said she did not expect to live to the end of that month, and if it was God's will

will she would be glad she might not, but she desired his will to be done.

Not having joined the church, she had a strong desire to give herself publicly and professedly to Christ, as an obedient disciple, and humbly to meet him in the solemn ordinance of the supper. Accordingly, in the presence of the deacons and some other church members, Mr. D. propounded to her the covenant, and, after her regular admission into the church, administered to her the consecrated elements. She had not appeared superstitious in her thoughts and feelings respecting this sacrament, and had repeatedly said that she did not wish to partake of it under the idea that it would alter the state and prospects of her soul; but that, nevertheless, it seemed to her an important public duty; she thought through divine grace she had a heart for it, and should derive comfort and benefit from it. She mentioned afterwards, that she never enjoyed any thing so much in her life; that Christ seemed indeed to hold communion with her, as well as to fill the chamber by his omnipresence; and that, though the time was too short for her desires, yet her bodily strength appeared to her incapable of supporting much longer such heavenly delight. On this season she often reflected with pleasure and gratitude.

Within a few days of her death, she longed more earnestly for heaven, repeating frequently, How happy should I be to die! yet always adding, that she was willing to wait God's time. She expressed great astonishment, that people could generally live in so thoughtless a manner, but said, she was once as thoughtless herself, and never sought God, till he first sought her and gave her a heart to seek him. Reflecting on a former dangerous illness, in which she was very unmindful of death, judgment and eternity, she told some of her friends, she often trembled to think what would have become of her, if she had died at that time; she thought it certain, she must have been lost. Consequently she felt the more tenderness for her fellow-creatures in a state of sin and exposure, and more than once declared, that, if her strength would permit, she would advise and warn every one, as solemnly as possible. Once she observed she hoped for an easy and speedy death, but was willing still to live and suffer according to what might be the will of God, and at last to die a hard death. After a struggle, in which she appeared to be dying, she observed, that she thought at the time, she was satisfied, if she was dying. In her last moments she was able to articulate nothing in connected sentences, and only now and then a word, such as angels, glory and the like, sufficient, however, to manifest, that she felt her soul on the wing to its final home, and that she was happy in the anticipation of being soon at rest in the service and enjoyment of her God and Saviour above.

POETRY.

## POETRY.

To the Editors of the Massachusetts  
Missionary Magazine.

GENTLEMEN,

The following HYMN, sung at an Ordination in a new town of Vermont, written for the occasion, you will publish if you think proper.

EUSEBIUS.

LET ev'ry heart with rapture rise,  
And praise the God who heard  
our cries ;

The truth of God to day prevails,  
Resound the news from hills and dales.

The gospel beams a blaze of light,  
Visions of God salute our sight ;  
The desert smiles, the mountains joy,  
And scenes of bliss our minds employ.

Rejoice, rejoice, ye friends of God ;  
Where late the tawny pagan trod,  
With human blood whose altars ran,  
Salvation sounds to guilty man.

In Jesus shall the earth be blest :  
Where churches meet he makes his  
rest.

To day with us he comes to dwell,  
To soothe our wo, our guilt dispel.

If we obey and walk with God,  
Here will he fix his long abode,  
Reveal the way we ought to go,  
And round the church bid comforts  
flow.

The Holy Spirit here shall come,  
And num'rous converts praise the Son ;  
The blind shall see, the dumb shall sing,  
The dead shall live, and praise their  
King.

His servants shall his truth, unfold,  
The love of Christ shall here be told,  
Till lasting peace shall bless the world,  
Till systems from their orbs are hurl'd.

Praise, praise the Lord, ye list'ning  
throng,  
This happy day Salute with song ;  
Ye fathers, youth and virgins join,  
And sing for blessings so divine.

## DEATH.

O H ! most delightful hour, by man  
Experienc'd here below,  
The hour that terminates his span,  
His folly and his wo !

Worlds should not bribe me back to  
tread  
Again life's dreary waste ;  
To see my days again o'erspread  
With all the gloomy past.

My home henceforth is in the skies ;  
Earth, seas and sun, adieu ;  
All heaven unfolded to my eyes,  
I have no sight for you.

Thus spake ASPASIO, firm possest  
Of faith's supporting rod ;  
Then breath'd his soul into its rest,  
The bosom of his God.

He was a man among the few,  
Sincere on virtue's side,  
And all his strength from scripture  
drew,  
To hourly use apply'd.

That rule he priz'd, by that he fear'd,  
He hated, hop'd and lov'd,  
Nor ever frown'd, or fad appear'd,  
But when his heart had rov'd.

For he was frail as thou or I,  
And evil felt within ;  
But, when he felt it, heav'd a sigh,  
And loath'd the thought of sin.

Such liv'd ASPASIO, and at last.  
Call'd up from earth to heav'n,  
The gulf of death triumphant pass'd,  
By gales of blessing driv'n.

His joys be mine, each reader cries,  
When my last hour arrives ;  
They shall be yours, my verse replies,  
Such only be your lives.

COWPER.

## REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS OF PRESIDENT  
DAVIES ON THE BIRTH  
OF A SON.

**T**HOU little wond'rous miniature  
of man,  
Form'd by unerring wisdom's perfect  
plan ;  
Thou little stranger, from eternal night  
Emerging into life's immortal light ;  
Thou heir of worlds unknown, thou  
candidate  
For an important, everlasting state,  
Where this young embryo shall its  
pow'r expand,  
Enlarging, rip'ning still, and never  
stand.  
This glimm'ring spark of being, just  
now struck  
From nothing by the all-creating Rock,  
To immortality shall flame and burn,  
When suns and stars to native darkness  
turn ;  
Thou shalt the ruins of the world sur-  
vive,  
And through the rounds of endless ages  
live.  
Now thou art born into an anxious state  
Of dubious trial for thy future fate :  
Now thou art listed in the war of life,  
The prize immense, and, O ! severe  
the strife.  
  
Another birth awaits thee, when  
the hour  
Arrives that lands thee on th' eternal  
shore ;  
(And, O ! 'tis near, with winged haste  
'twill come,  
Thy cradle rocks toward the neig'b'ring  
tomb ;)  
Then shall immortals say, "A son is  
born,"  
While thee as dead mistaken mortals  
mourn ;  
From glory then to glory thou shalt rise,  
Or sink from deep to deeper miseries ;  
Ascend perfection's everlasting scale,  
Or still descend from gulf to gulf in  
hell.  
  
Thou embryo-angel, or thou infant  
fiend,  
A being now begun, but ne'er to end,  
What boding fears a Father's heart  
torment,  
Trembling and anxious for the grand  
event,

Lest thy young soul, so late by Heav'n  
bestow'd,  
Forget her Father and forget her God !  
Lest, while imprison'd in this house  
of clay,  
To tyrant lusts she fall a helpless prey !  
And lest, descending still from bad to  
worse,  
Her immortality should prove her curse !  
  
Maker of souls ! avert so dire a doom,  
Or snatch her back to native nothing's  
gloom !

A MINISTER'S REFLECTIONS  
ON THE DEATH OF ONE  
OF HIS PEOPLE.

**O**f my dear flock one more is gone  
To appear before th'eternal throne,  
And pass the grand decisive test :  
" Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,"  
Surviving friends with tears entrust  
There till the gen'ral doom to rest.

The soul, dismiss'd from cumb'rous  
clay,  
Expiates in eternal day,  
And with the great Jehovah dwells ;  
The dawn of immortality  
With scenes unknown fills all the eye,  
And wonders vast and new reveals.

Thus while I'm dreaming life away,  
Or books and studies charm the day,  
My flock is dying one by one :  
Convey'd beyond my warning voice,  
To endless pains or endless joys ;  
Forever happy or undone.

I too ere long must yield my breath :  
My mouth forever clos'd in death,  
Shall found the gospel trump no  
more :  
Then, while my charge is in my reach,  
With fervour let me pray and preach,  
And eager catch the flying hour !

Almighty grace, my soul inspire,  
And touch my lips with heav'nly fire !  
Let faith and love and zeal arise !  
O teach me that divinest art,  
To reach the conscience, gain the heart,  
And train immortals for the skies !

\* \* \* DAVIES.